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COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY
MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 2 June 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the statement of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines dated 25 May 1998 on the recent nuclear tests conducted by India.

The statement was issued by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs in his position as the current Chairman of the Association of South-East Asian Nations Regional Forum.

I should be grateful if you would have the present statement issued as a document of the General Assembly, under items 64 and 81, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Felipe MABILANGAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Statement of the Chairman of the Association of South-East Asian Nations Regional Forum on nuclear tests

The Association of South-East Asian Nations Regional Forum is the only existing government-level entity for the discussion of political and security issues in the Asia-Pacific region. The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), consisting of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, has been the primary driving force of the ASEAN Regional Forum. The other participants include the 10 dialogue partners of ASEAN (United States of America, Japan, China, Russia, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, European Union and India) and Cambodia and Papua New Guinea. The Philippines is the current Chairman of the Regional Forum.

As early as 1995, the ASEAN Regional Forum put emphasis on the importance of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in promoting regional peace and security. The Forum subsequently welcomed the overwhelming adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996 as an important step in prohibiting nuclear test explosions. At the same time, the ASEAN Regional Forum stressed its determination to continue to contribute to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects. It was, therefore, a source of disappointment and grave concern to the Forum that these decisions and statements were completely disregarded through the carrying-out of the five separate nuclear tests recently conducted by India.

We are equally disturbed and acutely concerned over the reported decision of Pakistan to conduct nuclear tests of its own in response to the nuclear explosions undertaken by India. These tests would doubtless trigger a nuclear arms race in South Asia and create instability not only in the subcontinent but also in other parts of the world. Any nuclear tests at this time violate the spirit of the non-proliferation regime and tear at the fabric of inter-State relations. It is also lamentable if such an exercise diverts scarce resources from the imperatives of economic and social developments.

In view of this, we call on the Government of Pakistan to desist from undertaking its planned nuclear tests and appeal to it to exercise maximum restraint.

We call for the total cessation of all nuclear tests and urge those nations that have not done so to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The creation of a nuclear-free world is the ideal legacy that we can leave to mankind as we move on to the next millennium.